



Agriculture & Rural Development

Department:
Agriculture and Rural Development
North West Provincial Government
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



AgriCentre Building
Cnr. Dr. James Moroka and
Stadium Rd
Private Bag X2039, Mmabatho 2735

CHIEF DIRECTORATE: CORPORATE SERVICES DIRECTORATE: COMMUNICATION SERVICES

Tel: +27 (18) 389 5719/5684
Fax: +27(18) 384 4571
E-mail: Esetlhako@nwpg.gov.za

MEDIA STATEMENT

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Media Houses**

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DEPARTMENT'S SUPPORT LIFTS MORE FARMERS

The continued commitment to farmers support and development by the North West Department of Agriculture and development is giving birth to many blossoming businesses across the province. In the Bojanala District alone, farming entrepreneurs are at length breaking the barriers and entering the once stiff markets. One of those farmers, Sonto Mujukachi has her eyes glued to bigger farming territories. The urge of going back to her 'first love' has driven once a celebrated corporate executive manager to leave her occupation and join the farming sector. Mujukachi has vowed to make a mark on food security after quitting her full time job which she had been doing for 25 years and joined the agriculture sector permanently.

In a 50 hectares farm, she has bought and has been operating in since 2016, Mujukachi specialises in the production of agricultural products which include spinach, peppers and beans and baby marrows. Of the 50 hectares of the farm which is based at Brits within the Madibeng Local Municipality, only 25 hectares are under irrigation.

She has appreciated the support of nearly R1million infrastructure development from the North West Department of Agriculture and Rural Development. She indicated that the pivot system bought through the support has made the running of the farm a lot better and was looking forward to business growth. She is also receiving technical support through advisory services team of the Department.

"I started this company in 2016 as a sole owner. I was simply responding to government's call for woman industrialists to become involved in the agricultural sector. So our focus is to establish a formidable agricultural company that produces first grade peppers, spinach and cucumber for both domestic and international markets," she highlighted.

The farm is structured into four multispan tunnels with drip irrigation, a six hectare shade net structure, two hectares of open land with drip irrigation, 14 hectares open land with centre pivot. The 650m² packhouse consists of features such as cold room facilities, ablution and washing up facilities, sanitation machines, wrapping and packing facilities, pallet handling as well as loading ramps

She was so determined to succeed that she did an intensive research before putting her dream into action. She has assembled a team of highly driven individuals to run the farm. “I would to see the farm succeed at all costs and I was prepared to take many risks to into by investing my entire retirement package into it and to look for people with notable credentials in the sector. My team is partner focused and places the utmost trusting relationships within the group, with our stakeholders and business partners,” she alluded.

The 51-years-old mother of one, is currently employing 40 workers, 20 permanent as well as 20 seasonal. She is encouraged to contribute to provision employment opportunities. “The unemployment statistics do not paint a good picture for us as South Africa. I try to provide as many opportunities as I can especially for young people. I take full responsibility as an entrepreneur to ensure that Treasure Trove Farms make a difference by giving young people work opportunities, Mujakachi emphasised.

She also trains her staff on an ongoing basis and this she said assists to keep them up to date with new standard requirements and generally to have a skilled team. She further indicated that there was a lot of space for growth and development in the sector.

Her hard work and dedication has led her to secure supply contracts with giant stores like Woolworths, Pick ‘n Pay, Food Lovers Market and Fresh Mark. She supplies these all at a national market and on a daily basis.

She further supplies to the Pretoria and Johannesburg Fresh produce markets. Sonto said she was looking forward to many other supply opportunities and she was currently exploring the export market for cucumbers.

To any woman who would want to make it in the sector, Mujakachi said the sector is not easy, yet, it is very rewarding. “Besides the cost of production and changing weather patterns and other than relying on the breath of your employees skills, you need to have a good relationship with the community that you work in. It is amazing how our local farmers can have skills and expertise. I advise women farmers to take advantage of those and learn from others. The knowledge is amazing, do not only look into what you have, the world around you might be richer with expertise,” she acknowledged.

She emphasised that she was welcoming any farmer who would want to go and work with her. She is prepared to share her skills with others. With the big markets she is already exposed to, she indicated that she would want to see other farmer tapping into the same markets. She is also prepared to assist through her pack house and teach others packing methodologies. But over-all, Mujakachi indicated she is prepared for collaborations with emerging farmers who are determined to grow their business

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Enquiries: Ms Emelda Setlhako

Tel: 018 389 5684

Cell: 060 745 4020

Email: ESetlhako@nwpg.gov.za

Website: www.nwpg.gov.za/Agriculture/

Facebook: www.facebook.com/nwpread

Twitter: NorthWest_READ

